



**Establishing and Expanding a
Public Safety Telecommunicator Training Program
December 2021**

Acknowledgments

The Public Safety Telecommunicator Reclassification Toolkit was compiled through the efforts of numerous 911 professionals with a deep commitment to the individuals that are the first, first responders in any emergency. The goal of this toolkit is to provide public safety answering point (PSAP)/emergency communications center (ECC) leaders and decision-makers with a framework to help ensure job descriptions, training programs, and operational documents adequately reflect the evolving expectations of the public safety telecommunicator. This document, entitled “Guidelines for Establishing and Expanding a Public Safety Telecommunicator Training Program,” provides a framework for evaluating, updating, and maintaining your center’s training program to ensure it equips public safety telecommunicators with the knowledge and skills to perform their duties.

Thank you to the following industry experts who were integral in leading this effort and developing materials that will support future data-driven decisions of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), state and local 911 agencies, and state and local policymakers. Without their contribution of time and expertise, this document would not be possible.

- Andrea Shepard, MBA, Montgomery County Emergency Communications District, Texas
- April Heinze, ENP, National Emergency Number Association (NENA)
- Chad Chewing, Livingston County Central Dispatch / 911, Michigan
- Dan Henry, NENA
- Daniel R. Morden, MSA, PEM, Gratiot County Central Dispatch Authority, Michigan
- Halcyon Frank, ENP, The Dispatch Lab
- Harriet Rennie-Brown, ENP, National Association of State 911 Administrators (NASNA)
- Jerry Eisner, RedSky Technologies
- Kevin Haight, Motorola Solutions, previously with Idaho State Police
- Mark Lee, Denise Amber Lee Foundation
- Melissa Alterio, M.S., CPE, RPL, Cobb County Emergency Communications Department, Georgia
- Nathan Lee, Denise Amber Lee Foundation
- Rosa Ramos, ENP, CMPC, Alameda County Regional Emergency Communications Center, California
- Roxanne VanGundy, ENP, RPL, Lyons County 911, Kansas
- Tony Leese, South East Regional Emergency Services Agency (SERESA), Michigan
- Ty Wooten, ENP, International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED), previously with NENA

Table of Contents

1	Call to Action	1
2	Background	2
2.1	Moving Forward	3
3	The Importance of a Training Program.....	4
3.1	Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.....	4
3.2	Best Practices.....	5
3.3	Standards	6
3.4	Certifications.....	8
3.5	Continuing Education.....	9
4	Next Steps	11
	Appendix A – PST Responsibilities and Key Job Skills and Tasks	13
	Appendix B – Model Training Program	19
	Appendix C – Certification and Training Resources.....	22
	Appendix D – Guidance on Creating a Training Program	25
	Appendix E – Model Lesson Plan	33

HISTORY

Classification

The United States (U.S.) Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), under the Department of Labor, is responsible for the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) of workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, and disseminating data. “Occupations are classified based on work performed and, in some cases, on the skills, education and/or training needed to perform the work.” [[Classification Principles and Coding Guidelines, 2018 SOC \(bls.gov\)](#)]

The Decisions to Not Reclassify

BLS ultimately was unable to reclassify because of the lack of objective, measurable data; thus, the 911 telecommunicator position remains classified under the Office and Administrative Support Occupation. The decision not to reclassify PSTs from the Office and Administrative Support Occupation to Protective Services was a blow to the industry and a campaign to increase the visibility of PSTs and their roles and responsibilities was undertaken.

Moving Forward

It is in the best interest of the 911 community to build the case for the reclassification of the PST by updating job descriptions, training programs, and written directives to accurately depict job duties and responsibilities, as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the modern PST.

For more information on the Toolkit visit www.911.gov

1 Call to Action

It is vital that when a person dials 911, they receive a consistent level of 911 service—no matter where they live or travel in the U.S.

Consequently, there must be agreed-upon common elements that ensure the person who answers a 911 call has met baseline core competencies, and that the public will receive a standard level of expertise and professionalism when communicating with a public safety answering point (PSAP), an emergency communications center (ECC), or other emergency services provider.

This toolkit has been developed to help ECCs take the necessary actions to support the change in job classification of public safety telecommunicators (PSTs) from clerical to **protective services**. The case for change begins at the ECC and includes updating job descriptions, developing a training program, and addressing technology and tool needs for PSTs. To support the change in job classification, ECCs are encouraged to read and act upon all four parts of this toolkit as necessary.

This document, *Guidelines for Establishing and Expanding a Public Safety Telecommunicator Training Program*, is part two of a four-part toolkit that addresses the steps an ECC can take to prepare for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reclassification efforts.



This document is a call to action to evaluate, update, and maintain your center’s training program to ensure it equips PSTs with the knowledge and skills to perform the duties and tasks necessary for the job.

This toolkit will help you evaluate your training program. It provides a background on the importance of a training program and a framework to help assess, update, and/or develop a training program.

Understand your training needs

- Review and update your job descriptions
- Get to know specific job requirements
- Identify which certifications a PST must obtain
- Conduct a self-assessment and identify any fiscal impacts

Engage your training subject-matter experts

- Identify learning objectives
- Align your training program with ECC operations
- Implement evaluation methods

Seek advice from other ECCs

- Be creative, make your training program relative to the adult learner
- Design instructional methods appropriate for different generational learners
- Review neighboring jurisdictions' training programs

Review often and make changes

- Review the training program
- Develop a process to keep the training program current and updated
- Make changes as often as necessary to ensure accuracy

2 Background

Each year millions of calls are made to 911. The estimated 98,300¹ dedicated men and women who answer those calls are facing a time of great change as their careers, roles, and responsibilities move from a legacy environment to a Next Generation 911 (NG911) environment. Their roles in providing care include such tasks as:

- Helping to calm a terrified teenager hiding in a closet during a home invasion, while simultaneously providing information about the incident to first responders while they rush to the scene
- Directing a frightened caller on how to safely escape a burning building or take protective actions if they are trapped
- Providing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instructions to a panicked parent holding a lifeless child

These dedicated professionals are trained to stay on the line with callers during emergent situations and provide a sense of calm in the worst times of callers' lives. However, even with the expectations and

¹ Police, Fire, and Ambulance Dispatchers. Occupational Outlook Handbook. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/office-and-administrative-support/police-fire-and-ambulance-dispatchers.htm#tab-1>. Last accessed 05/19/2021.

stressful demands of the position, they fall into a clerical/administrative job category for classification and reporting purposes.

The United States (U.S.) Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), under the Department of Labor, is responsible for the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) of workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, and disseminating data.² The classifications are reviewed every ten years, and in 2018, the efforts of 911 professionals to make the case for reclassification failed due to a lack of quantifiable data and certification for the PST profession. Part two of this four-part toolkit will help guide ECCs in the development of training programs that lead to data that helps support the reclassification effort.

2.1 Moving Forward

It is in the best interest of the 911 community to build the case for the reclassification of the PST by not only updating their job descriptions but also by establishing and expanding training programs that support the knowledge and skills required for the modern PST. Training, certification, and continuing education are important for earning and maintaining qualifications that are important to the PST profession and aligning with requirements of other public safety professions. Currently, 35 states have embarked on such a path and have adopted minimum training requirements for PSTs. Additionally, 29 states require certification and/or training in scripted protocols for emergency medical dispatch (EMD).³

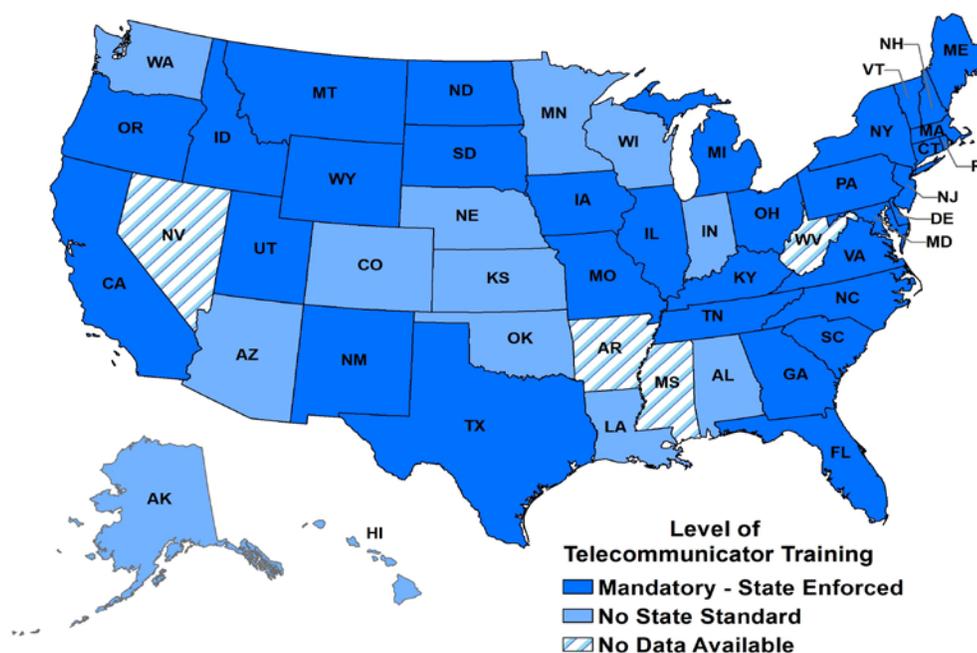


Figure 1: States with Training Standards

² Standard Occupational Classification. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. <https://www.bls.gov/soc/>. Last accessed 05/19/2021.

³ Profile Database 2020 Report. www.911.gov

While the 911 community understands the evolution of the telecommunicator position over the past decade, many training programs do not adequately prepare PSTs for the demands of today's 911 environment. It is imperative that 911 directors, training personnel, and decision-makers develop training programs to accurately reflect the responsibilities of the PST in today's technical and complex emergency communications environment.

3 The Importance of a Training Program

With the millions of 911 calls placed each year, the need for training standards is vital. State legislators, agencies, and individuals all play a role in ensuring that a PST is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to execute their job duties and tasks properly. The importance of the PST's role stresses the importance of employees who are well-qualified and well-trained.

Just as there is no one-size-fits-all solution for ECCs, as the roles and responsibilities vary greatly from center to center, there is no simple answer to building the perfect employee training program. It is a multi-step approach that begins with ECCs identifying the PSTs' responsibilities and key job knowledge, skills, and abilities. ECCs are encouraged to familiarize themselves with and adopt national standards and best practices. Identifying and adopting certification programs both protect the public and validate the knowledge a PST must possess. Training programs should seek to meet the needs of new hires and veteran PSTs, highlighting the need for continuing education in a comprehensive training program. The graphic below illustrates the process that ECCs should walk through when developing a PST training program specific to their operations.



3.1 Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

The knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) necessary to be successful as a PST are vast and proficiency in the position requires significant training. Training programs should focus on teaching the knowledge and skills that a PST will need to be able to execute their job properly. While abilities are an innate attribute to that person, they can be sharpened and increased through training. Below is a comprehensive list of KSAs that are important to PSTs and can be found in Appendix A, PST Responsibilities and Key Job Skills and Tasks.

Knowledge	Skills	Abilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Geography •Phone and computer basics •Stress management •Chain of command •Liability •Terminology •Roles and responsibilities •Agency •Performance standards •Laws, statutes, and codes •Incident mangement •Governmental standards •Technology •Risk assessment •Social media •Automated data •Video messaging •Incident command 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Keyboarding/Typing •Multitasking •Decision-making •Critical thinking •Verbal and written communications skills •Ability to work on a team •Active listening/hearing •Customer service •Computer •Telephony •Call control •Conflict resolution •Problem solving •Analytical •Troubleshooting •Text messaging •Data analytics •Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Quick decision-making •Empathy •Respect •Patience •Maturity •Even-tempered •Integrity •Ethical •Life-long learner •Dependable •Flexible •Efficient •Tolerant •Analytical •Detail orientated

Figure 2: KSAs

3.2 Best Practices

In May 2016, the National 911 Program published the *Recommended Minimum Training Guidelines for the Telecommunicator*. The goal was to identify nationally recognized, universally accepted, minimum topics that can be used to train aspiring and current PSTs and which provide the foundation for their ongoing professional development and continuing education elements.

While the National 911 Program facilitated the project by providing a forum for discussion and development, the guidelines are not federally owned or mandated; they are the joint product of members of the 911 industry and 911 subject-matter experts from across the nation. The guidelines identify the recommended minimum topics to be included in any PST training program. These topics were identified by the working group, with input from other key stakeholders representing the 911 community.

Per the guidelines: “These recommended topics are suggested for inclusion in minimum training for those who aspire to the role of telecommunicator (call-taker and/or dispatcher) as defined by the authority having jurisdiction.”⁴

While the full document can be found at www.911.gov, below are the key elements of the training program, and Appendix B, Model Training Program, provides more details regarding the types of training topics that

⁴ The National 911 Program, *Recommended Minimum Training Guidelines for the Telecommunicator*. (May 2016) https://www.911.gov/pdf/Minimum_Training_Guidelines_for_911_Telecommunicator_2016.pdf

could be taught in each section. Agencies can use this information to form the basis of their training program or as a place to begin a gap analysis if a training program is already in place. Of course, agencies can always go above and beyond the minimum recommendations and should be specific to the agency.



Figure 3: Minimum Training Guidelines Key Elements

3.3 Standards

Several 911 industry bodies are recognized as standards development organizations by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and focus on creating and refining standards and best practices to help progress all aspects of 911 (e.g., technology, operations, training, etc.). Those with a strong focus on training include:

- Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International
- National Emergency Number Association (NENA)
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

Additionally, several other organizations and vendors have taken a vested interest in the training of PSTs.

Standards are developed by stakeholders from across the industry based on best practices and data that proves repetitive and precise processes result in stronger outcomes. According to ANSI, only one organization can develop a standard on a specific topic; therefore, in some cases, industry organizations collaborate to develop a joint standard.

The following are approved American National Standards (ANS) that have been developed to train ECC personnel. The list is not all-inclusive.

Table 1: Training Standards and Best Practices

Document Number	Standard and/or Best Practice
APCO ANS 3.103.2-2015	<i>Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety PSTs®</i>
APCO ANS 3.108.2-2018	<i>Core Competencies and Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Communications Instructor</i>
APCO ANS 1.115.1-2018	<i>APCO Core Competencies, Operational Factors, and Training for Next Generation Technologies in Public Safety Communications</i>
APCO ANS 3.102.2-2017	<i>Core Competencies and Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Communications Supervisor</i>
APCO ANS 3.101.3-2017	<i>Core Competencies and Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Communications Training Officer (CTO)</i>
APCO ANS 1.113.1-2019	<i>Public Safety Communications Incident Handling Process</i>
APCO/NENA ANS 3.105.1-2015	<i>Minimum Training Standard for TTY/TDD Use in the Public Safety Communications Center</i>
APCO ANS 3.110.1-2019	<i>Cybersecurity Training for Public Safety Communications Personnel</i>
APCO ANS 1.101.3-2015	<i>Standard for Public Safety Telecommunicators When Responding to Calls of Missing, Abducted and Sexually Exploited Children</i>
APCO ANS 1.112.2-2020	<i>Best Practices for the Use of Social Media in Public Safety Communications</i>
NENA-STA-020.1-2020	<i>NENA Standard for 9-1-1 Call Processing</i>
NENA-STA-002.1-2013	<i>NENA Standard on 9-1-1 Acute/Traumatic and Chronic Stress Management</i>
NENA-STA-037.2-2018	<i>NENA TTY/TDD Communications Standard Operating Procedure Model Recommendation</i>
NENA-INF-022.2-2017	<i>NENA Protocol for Handling Calls Regarding Human Trafficking Information Document</i>
NENA-STA-013.2-2016	<i>Public Safety Communications & Railroad Interaction Standard Operating Procedures</i>
NENA-STA-038.3.1-2018	<i>NENA Standard For NORAD/FAA Notification: Airborne Events</i>
NENA-STA-001.1-2013	<i>NENA Suicide Prevention Standard</i>

Document Number	Standard and/or Best Practice
NFPA 1061	<i>Standard for Public Safety Telecommunications Personnel Professional Qualifications</i>
NFPA 1221	<i>Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems</i>

3.4 Certifications

3.4.1 PST Certifications

Attending training classes and workshops and obtaining certifications are paramount for a PST to succeed in the public safety environment. Industry best practices and standards identify that a successful training program enhances professional competencies through training and obtaining certifications. PST certification can result in higher pay and other benefits for the PST, such as membership in a specialty group, such as a Critical Incident Team, or becoming a Communications Training Officer.

While there are various certifications and licensure requirements across the nation, the most common in the industry include the following:

- Basic Emergency Telecommunicator (ETC)
- Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD)
- Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD)
- Emergency Police Dispatch (EPD)
- CPR for Healthcare Providers
- National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) 100, 200, 700, and 800; advanced courses are 300 and 400
- Emergency Number Professional (ENP)
- Registered Public-Safety Leader (RPL)

For more detailed information on the types of certificates and resources for PST training, see Appendix C, Certification and Training Resources.

3.4.2 Agency Certification

ECCs can seek certification of their training program to demonstrate their commitment to excellence through accreditation programs. The process to achieve accreditation is rigorous, but it demonstrates the ECC is taking steps to deliver high-quality training. Ultimately this will better prepare the PST with the skills and knowledge needed to perform their job.

Accreditation is a formal mechanism for ECCs to certify their training programs, demonstrating that the training program aligns with industry standards. Applying for accreditation and/or certification demonstrates an ECC’s commitment to training.

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), through its Training Academy Accreditation, and APCO, through its Agency Training Program Certification, are formal mechanisms that lead to certification of an agency’s training program.⁵ The primary objective of both programs is to advance training and professional development.

For APCO training program certification, ECCs must demonstrate that their training program meets or exceeds all training requirements listed in APCO ANS 3.103.2.2015, *Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators*.⁶ The contents of the standard are provided below.



Figure 4: APCO Minimum Training Standard Content Areas

3.5 Continuing Education

New technologies are integrated into emergency communications frequently. As such, PSTs may need to develop new skillsets to keep pace. PSTs need to be trained often for new skills throughout their careers. Continuing education is a vital element to this process, especially since the landscape of 911 is changing as legacy networks and systems migrate to NG911. Certain roles and responsibilities are ever-evolving and ensuring that all PSTs are aware of those changes helps to significantly reduce anxiety as well as personal and agency liability.

Continuing education could include classroom and online training. While online training is available from many sources, it is not recommended that this type of on-duty training be conducted when staff are assigned call-take or dispatch responsibilities. Best practices recommend that PSTs receive a minimum of 24 hours of continuing education annually.

⁵ Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) <https://www.calea.org/training-academy> (May 2021). APCO Agency Training Program Certification <https://www.apcointl.org/training-and-certification/comm-center-training-programs/apco-project-33-training-program-certification/> (May 2021)

⁶ APCO ANS 3.103.2.2015, *Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators* <https://www.apcointl.org/training-and-certification/comm-center-training-programs/training-standards-guidelines/> (March 2021)

The table below lists several topics that can be developed for continuing education programs.

Table 2: Training Areas

Training Topics	
Aircraft incidents	Mass casualty incidents
Animal complaints	Mass notifications
Area familiarization	Multimedia (video)
Bomb threats	NG911 technologies
Call triaging and management	Preparing for court testimony
Canine resources	Press releases and media handling
Carjacking	Public works/utility contacts
Computer-aided dispatch (CAD) information entry requirements	Quality assurance/Quality improvement (QA/QI)
Crime scene management	Railroad incidents
Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)	Red Cross/Salvation Army and other services
Domestic violence call handling	School Violence
Harassment/Sexual harassment training	Social media
Hate crimes	Stress management
Hazardous materials	Suicidal callers
Home invasions	Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)/ Teletypewriter (TTY)
Hostage negotiations	Text-to-911
Images (pictures)	Vehicle pursuits
Incident command	Violent crimes
Interpersonal relations and team building	Warrants

Training Topics	
Listening skills	Watercraft emergencies
Mapping/map reading	Workplace violence

In addition to in-house resources for training, numerous vendors provide public safety communications training courses, and many are available online. Appendix C, Certification and Training Resources, provides a list of training resources available to the ECC.

4 Next Steps

Initial and continuing education training for PSTs is exceedingly important as they provide essential services to the public in an ever-expanding and rapidly changing public safety environment. PSTs play a critical role in the chain of public safety response. Their ability to have a critical impact on improving victim/patient, responder, and citizen safety outcomes relies on the training PSTs receive. The 911 community needs training programs that are based on nationally recommended topics that can be used to train aspiring and current PSTs.

While the BLS reclassification process is not scheduled to begin for a few years, the time to make changes is now, so training programs are implemented in advance of the next classification effort, and the data reflects the necessary knowledge and skills required of the PSTs' roles and responsibilities.

911 authorities should review their current training program for the PST positions in their operations using the documents provided in Appendix D, Guidance on Creating a Training Program, and Appendix B, Model Training Program. The model, reflective of current expectations and future NG911 requirements, has been designed to simplify the process of reviewing your training program.

Consideration also should be given to sharing this document with training personnel and other stakeholders to assist with training program creation and the update process.

Appendix A – PST Responsibilities and Key Job Skills and Tasks

Responsibility	Key Job Skills and Tasks
Screen initial calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying call delivery method (phone, text, video, picture, automated data) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Callers may use traditional methods such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dialing 911 ▪ Using a 10-digit phone line – Callers may also use multiple technological platforms to contact the ECC, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Text-to-911 ▪ Video-to-911 ▪ Video relay services ▪ Social media – While other calls may be delivered without human intervention, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Automated alarms ▪ Telematics ▪ Artificial Intelligence (gunshot detection) • Prioritizing call answering • Greeting caller • Projecting a professional demeanor • Providing calming instructions to obtain information
Demonstrate clear and effective communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively listening • Conveying respect and empathy • Enunciating clearly while avoiding jargon with the caller • Controlling the call • Using appropriate terminology, codes, signals with field responders

Responsibility	Key Job Skills and Tasks
Ascertain incident information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtaining and verifying the incident location • Interpreting geographic information system (GIS) coordinate information and knowledge of mapping systems • Obtaining and verifying contact information • Rapidly determining the nature of the incident • Establishing when the incident happened • Identifying who is involved in the incident • Analyzing information that could include automated data feeds such as cameras, sensors, telematics • Using social media to investigate incident details (i.e., suicide message, images of suspects)
Determine scene and responder safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interrogating the caller to learn the circumstances of the emergency • Using multiple resources to determine situational awareness of a scene (i.e., hazardous materials or high occupancy locations) • Using tools and data such as video from mobile devices, body cameras, traffic cameras, drones, and real-time location tracking to improve situational awareness and assist incident commanders on scene • Determining additional risks such as weapons present, medical conditions, or mobility issues of victims that complicate or threaten the health and safety of the scene
Identify and mitigate caller safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking that the reporting party not get involved in the situation, keep a safe distance, and remove themselves from the incident if it is an unsafe situation • Staying in contact with the caller to ensure their safety until responders are on scene • Interpreting audio cues, such as emotion and background noise • Recognizing indicators of psychological distress
Document information accurately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documenting incident details quickly and accurately • Establishing incident priority based on written directives
Caller management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using call control techniques and tactics to elicit information quickly and accurately from challenged callers • Using calming techniques such as persistent repetition; the use of “I” statements to break through the hysterical threshold • Deploying language services to assist foreign-speaking callers

Responsibility	Key Job Skills and Tasks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing counsel to suicidal persons, domestic violence victims or serving as the primary contact with a hostage-taker • Utilizing mental health resources
Take appropriate action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascertaining if public safety resource dispatch is required and relaying information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – If yes, coordinating the dispatch of the appropriate emergency services – If no, providing the caller with the appropriate information • Reviewing request for service details • Informing caller of actions and advising of appropriate updates • Determining the need for outside agency resources such as traffic management, roadway clearance, towing services, power and utility services, hostage negotiators, social services, etc. • Using internal and external agency control devices (weather notification systems, air warnings, emergency management warning system activation, etc.) • Using social media to inform public
Provide pre-arrival instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing pre-arrival instructions for law enforcement events, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Suicidal persons – Active shooter events – Deescalating persons in crisis (post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD], mental illness) – Separating domestic violence victim from the abuser – Protecting children at the scene – Serving as a hostage negotiator – Preliminary clearance of roadway obstructions to prevent further injury or secondary accidents – Advice to crash victims to prevent further injury • Providing pre-arrival instructions for fire events, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Escaping a structure fire – Protection for persons trapped in a fire – Wildland fire evacuation – Avalanche disasters

Responsibility	Key Job Skills and Tasks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accelerator stuck - Sinking vehicle • Providing lifesaving instructions for medical events, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bleeding control - Choking/airway clearance - CPR - Respiratory arrest - Cardiac arrest - Drowning - Childbirth
Process requests for service for law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making notifications • Using federal and state databases to inquire about driver license statuses, registrations, and wanted checks, etc.
Record data regarding the incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a CAD incident • Documenting important and necessary call details for response awareness and responder protection • Updating the CAD incident • Additional data collection from the same or other callers reporting the incident
Initiate incident response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigning units to the incident • Relaying pertinent incident information • Obtaining unit acknowledgment • Coordinating available resources • Relaying updates to units • Broadcasting be on the lookouts (BOLOs) or attempt to locate (ATL) messages • Disseminating information to other resources • Anticipating potential escalation • Performing status checks

Responsibility	Key Job Skills and Tasks
Coordinate during events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifying supervisors • Notifying appropriate resources • Corresponding with other agencies • Activating mutual aid, when applicable • Disseminating interdepartmental intelligence • Providing shift briefings
Control radio traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring radio channel(s) • Active listening and awareness techniques • Acknowledging radio traffic • Complying with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations
Participate in post-incident activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing testimony • Testifying in court proceedings • Participating in call critique and QA review sessions • Providing or requesting peer support and debriefings • Participating in critical incident stress management (CISM) debriefings • Participating in after-action report meetings
Operate agency equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating telephony system effectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Answering incoming calls – Placing outgoing calls – Performing conference calls – Placing calls on hold if appropriate – Performing appropriate transfers – Utilizing text-to-911 programs – Rapidly identifying and recognizing service interruptions such as equipment failures, cybersecurity breaches, swatting, slamming or spamming incidents, or denial of service (DOS) attacks – Operating teletypewriter (TTY)/telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) – Responding to multimedia sessions/short message sessions (MMS/SMS)

Responsibility	Key Job Skills and Tasks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responding to video-relayed information • Operating technology systems such as CAD, call-handling equipment (CHE), logging recorder systems, traffic cameras, traffic lights, perimeter cameras, radio technology, alarms, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Accessing incident data – Updating incident data – Assigning appropriate units – Interpreting other sensor data such as automatic emergency notification from law enforcement vehicles or body sensors, biometric alarms, and notifications – Interpreting smart building data and sensors, including video feeds, hazmat • Utilizing map/GIS programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identifying the location of the incident – Interpreting automatic number identification/automatic location identification (ANI/ALI) to locate emergencies – Plotting GPS coordinates – Providing directions – Using automatic vehicle location (AVL) data to track units • Operating radio systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dispatching calls – Relaying information – Providing updated information – Maintaining current status of units • Operating RMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Accessing records – Updating records • Maintaining equipment functionality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Testing equipment – Troubleshooting equipment – Reporting problems

Responsibility	Key Job Skills and Tasks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applying contingency plans • Operating computer systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful passing of required background checks and clearances to operate sensitive databases. - Accessing database information (National Crime Information Center [NCIC], local/state crime network, Integrated Public Alert and Warning System [IPAWS]) - Operating mass notification software - Using social media platforms - Conducting inquiries - Updating/Modifying/Maintaining systems - Following regulations - Maintaining systems
Enhance profession competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek additional training • Completing training and certifications required for assigned PST position • Completing continuing education and career development • Following established ECC policies and procedures • Adhering to federal disclosure and privacy laws • Using debriefing tools, stress management techniques, and critical incident response models

Appendix B – Model Training Program

This section lists the categories and recommended training topics from the National 911 Program's *Recommended Minimum Training Guidelines for the Telecommunicator*.⁷

1. Roles and Responsibilities

- a. Introduction, Mission, Terminology
- b. Public Safety Team
- c. Ethics, Professionalism, Values, Personal Conduct, Image
- d. Policies, Procedures, Rules, Regulations
- e. Duties and Responsibilities
- f. Communities and Agencies Served
- g. Responder Safety

2. Legal Concepts

- a. Liability, Confidentiality, Negligence, Duty
- b. Law Enforcement Agencies
- c. Fire/Rescue Agencies
- d. EMS Agencies
- e. Public Safety Communications Agencies
- f. Documentation, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Recording, and Records Retention
- g. Privacy Laws

3. Interpersonal Communications

- a. Communication Techniques
- b. Information Processing, Communication Cycle
- c. Problem Solving, Critical Thinking
- d. Customer Service
- e. Diversity/Demographics
- f. Non-Native-Language Callers
- g. Communications-Impaired Callers

4. Emergency Communications Technology

- a. Telephony Technologies (e.g., PBX/MLTS/VoIP)
- b. Basic 9-1-1 and Enhanced 9-1-1
- c. Automatic Number Identification (ANI)/Automatic Location Identification (ALI)
- d. Wireless Phase I and Wireless Phase II
- e. Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1)

⁷ Section II – Categorical Explanation and Recommended Training Topics
https://www.911.gov/pdf/Minimum_Training_Guidelines_for_911_Telecommunicator_2016.pdf

- f. Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)/Teletypewriter (TTY)/Telephone Relay Service (TRS)
- g. Text to 9-1-1
- h. Telematics
- i. Computerized Mapping/Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- j. Logging Records
- k. Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) Systems
- l. Mobile Data Systems, Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), Paging, Alarms, etc.
- m. Call Transfers, Alternate and Default Routing, etc.
- n. Mass Notification
- o. Security Breaches, Cybersecurity Threats

5. Call Processing

- a. Call Receiving
- b. Interviewing/Interrogation Techniques
- c. Controlling the Call
- d. Managing High-Risk Calls
- e. Managing Specialty Calls
- f. Call Categorization/Prioritization
- g. Event Categorization
- h. Homeland Security/Terrorism/Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)
- i. Aircraft/Rail Incident/Marine
- j. Hazardous Materials Incidents
- k. Missing/Exploited/Trafficked Persons
- l. Fire Service Overview
- m. Fire Service Call Processing
- n. Fire Service Dispatching
- o. EMS Overview
- p. EMS Call Processing
- q. EMS Call Dispatching
- r. Structured Call-Taking Protocols and Standards Overview
- s. Law Enforcement Overview
- t. Law Enforcement Call Processing
- u. Law Enforcement Dispatching
- v. Responder-Initiated Calls
- w. Special-Needs Callers

6. Emergency Management

- a. Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS)
- b. National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- c. Emergency Management Roles and Responsibilities
- d. Disaster Preparedness
- e. Mutual-Aid/Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT)

7. Radio Communication

- a. Radio Communication Techniques
- b. Radio Technology and Equipment
- c. Rationale for Radio Procedures and Protocols
- d. Radio Discipline
- e. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Rules

8. Stress Management

- a. Definition, Causation, Identification
- b. Strategies for Dealing with Stress
- c. Management of Critical Incident Stress

9. Quality Assurance

- a. Quality Assurance (QA)/Quality Control (QC)/Quality Improvement (QI)
- b. DOR/Skills Performance Testing/Performance Standards
- c. Identify Trends from QA to Address in Continuing Education/In-Service for QI

10. On-the-Job Training

- a. Agency and Departmental Policies and Procedures
- b. Agency and Departmental Information Technologies Operations
- c. Interagency Networks and Databases
- d. Console Systems and Equipment
- e. Structure of Local Governance
- f. National Crime Information Center (NCIC)
- g. National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS)
- h. Governmental and Private Resources
- i. Media/Information Dissemination
- j. Geography/GIS
- k. Documentation, FOIA Requirements, Recording, and Records Retention
- l. Call-Tracing and Records-Retrieval Procedures
- m. Records Management Systems (RMS)
- n. Roles of Federal Government Resources

Appendix C – Certification and Training Resources

Basic Telecommunicator Training and Certification

Course	Provider	Hours	Website
Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST)	APCO	40 hours	https://www.apcointl.org/training-and-certification/disciplines/public-safety-telecommunicator-pst/
ETC (Emergency Telecommunicator)	International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED)	40 hours	https://www.emergencydispatch.org/what-we-do/courses-and-training?tab=etc-tab
Public Safety Telecommunicator	PowerPhone	40 hours	https://powerphone.com/powerphone-launches-public-safety-telecommunicator-course/
CPR for Healthcare Providers	Numerous	Varies	Multiple
NIMS ICS 100, 200, 700, and 800; advanced courses 300 and 400	FEMA	Varies	https://training.fema.gov/nims/

Protocol Training and Certification

Course	Provider	Hours	Website
Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD)	APCO	32 hours	https://www.apcointl.org/training-and-certification/disciplines/emergency-medical-dispatch-emd/emergency-medical-dispatcher-emd/
Law Enforcement Communications (LEC)	APCO	32 hours	https://www.apcointl.org/training-and-certification/disciplines/law-enforcement/law-enforcement-communications-lec/
Fire Service Communications (FSC)	APCO	32 hours	https://www.apcointl.org/training-and-certification/disciplines/fire-service-dispatch/fire-service-communications/
Emergency Medical Dispatch	IAED	24 hours	https://www.emergencydispatch.org/what-we-do/courses-and-training?tab=medical-tab
Emergency Fire Dispatch	IAED	24 hours	https://www.emergencydispatch.org/what-we-do/courses-and-training?tab=fire-tab

Course	Provider	Hours	Website
Emergency Police Dispatch	IAED	24 hours	https://www.emergencydispatch.org/what-we-do/courses-and-training?tab=police-tab
Emergency Medical Dispatch	PowerPhone	24 hours	https://powerphone.com/sp_faq/emergency-medical-dispatch/
Law Enforcement Dispatch	PowerPhone	24 hours	https://powerphone.com/sp_faq/law-enforcement-dispatch/
Fire Service Dispatch	PowerPhone	24 hours	https://powerphone.com/sp_faq/fire-service-dispatch/

Advanced Certifications

Course	Provider	Website
Emergency Number Professional (ENP)	NENA	https://www.nena.org/page/enpcertification2017
Registered Public-Safety Leader (RPL)	APCO	https://www.apcointl.org/training-and-certification/leadership-programs/registered-public-safety-leader-rpl/

Training Resources

Resources	
APCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White papers • Articles • Certification • In-person courses • Online courses • Webinars
Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security tips • Cybersecurity training
Denise Amber Lee Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinars • Guidelines
The Dispatch Lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online courses • Onsite training
IAED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programs • Continuing education programs

Resources

National Association of State 911 Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles • White papers
NENA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White papers • Articles • In-person courses • Virtual courses • Certification • Webinars
911 Training Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Podcasts • Videos • Documents
Police Legal Sciences: Dispatch Pro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online courses
PowerPhone – Dispatch U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person courses • Training programs • Continuing education programs
The Public Safety Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video on demand • Training program
Public Safety Training Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person courses • Training programs • Online courses • 2-minute trainings
Virtual Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video on demand

Appendix D – Guidance on Creating a Training Program

What is a training program?

A training program is not a one-size-fits-all approach. There is no simple answer to building the perfect PST training program. But there are a few elements that are consistently present. Ultimately the benefits of a well-executed training program include:

- Develops skillsets
- Increases knowledge
- Boosts performance
- Promotes employee retention

How to use this guidance document

While this guidance document is relevant to the entire 911 community, its use is specifically geared toward those responsible for creating and updating training programs.

Each training program topic area contains two major components (see figure below). For each topic area, sample language has been provided, as well as further “advice and tips” to take into consideration.

Guidance

Provides an overview of the topic area, an explanation of the area’s crucial factors, and recommendations for avoiding pitfalls

Sample Language

Provides sample language that can be “cut-and-pasted” and easily modified to align with ECC-specific requirements

Before you get started ... a checklist

✓ Understand your training needs

The most important step before undertaking a review of your training program is to review your job descriptions and written directives to ensure they are up to date and detail the specific skills and knowledge a PST will need. It is important to have a full grasp on any legislative requirements with which the ECC must comply, as well as identify any certifications a PST must obtain. Conducting a self-assessment may expose gaps in the training program that will need to be addressed. ECCs also should identify any fiscal impacts and develop a budget. A lot of training is free, and a small budget should not prohibit training. ECCs may need to be creative in the methods and delivery of training.

✓ Engage your training subject-matter experts

Your training subject-matter experts (SMEs) are a great resource to engage in establishing program learning objectives. Learning objectives need to align with current ECC operations. Evaluation methods, to assess if learning objectives have been achieved, also are important.

✓ Seek advice from other ECCs

Be creative—make your training program relative to the adult learner. Review your neighbors' training programs. They can serve as a resource, so you do not have to start from scratch. Including training for veteran PSTs is just as important as new hire training.

✓ Review often and make changes

Training programs should be viewed as a living and breathing document. Develop a process to keep the training program current and updated. Make changes and update as often as necessary to keep the program accurate and relevant.

Training Program Guidance, Sample Language, and Examples

Using a curriculum will help identify the components of the training program. This is a comprehensive set of learning objectives, content, materials, and methods for evaluation for the participant to assure they attained the training goals. *A curriculum is not a lesson plan.*

There are several steps for developing a curriculum. Using this guidebook will help you through the process of developing a training program. Multiple 911 training programs were reviewed, and this is a culmination of the best practices for developing a training program.

Mission and Vision of the ECC

Guidance

Determine the ECC's organizational objectives. Having a clear vision of the mission of the ECC will set the foundation for identifying the training needs.

Sample Language

Get the right people, to the right place, in the right time.

Training Needs

Guidance

Assess the training needs of the ECC. Work with new hires and veteran PSTs to determine the types of training programs needed and who needs training. Compare your training program to your ECC's written directives and industry best practices and standards. Make notes of any gaps or updates that need to be done.

Tips and Advice

Budgets can be a constraint to some ECCs, so it may not be possible to meet all the needs. However, many resources for free training exist.

Sample Language

Need:

Every six months, complete Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) training

Text-to-911

Cybersecurity

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) training

CPR completed every two years

Learning Objectives

Guidance

Learning objectives define learning outcomes and focus teaching. They also indicate to the PST what they are expected to learn or the skills to acquire during training. Learning objectives should be specific and observable, as well as have criteria for measuring progress towards a target.

Using the S.M.A.R.T. goals format allows an ECC to develop measurable goals.

Specific – Your goal should be clear and specific.

It should answer the five “W” questions :

- What do I want to accomplish?
- Why is this goal important?
- Who is involved?
- Where is it located?
- Which resources are involved?

Measurable – You should be able to assess progress towards a goal. You should be able to answer the question, how will I know when it's accomplished?

Sample Language

Goals	Vague	Specific
<i>Specific</i>	<i>The trainee shall enter a call into CAD.</i>	<i>The trainee shall enter the address of the incident into CAD.</i>
<i>Measurable</i>	<i>The trainee shall answer the 911 call quickly.</i>	<i>The trainee shall answer the 911 call <15 seconds 20% of the time.</i>
<i>Attainable</i>	<i>The trainee needs to know backup procedures.</i>	<i>The trainee will demonstrate how to restart the CAD system.</i>

Attainable – Can the person do it? Goals need to be realistic and attained to be successful.

Results Focused – Explain the why; make it relevant to the PST.

Time Focused – Every goal needs a target date by which to achieve something. This does not mean the PST has to learn everything at once, but it can serve as a checkpoint to assure the PST is on track with the measured expectations.

Tips and Advice

A common mistake is using words like “know” or “understand,” which are not actions that can be objectively observed.

Great learning objectives improve teaching and learning.

Goals	Vague	Specific
<i>Results Focused</i>	<i>The trainee needs to demonstrate competence.</i>	<i>The trainee needs to score 80% or higher to pass the quiz.</i>
<i>Time Focused</i>	<i>The trainee needs to know commonplace names.</i>	<i>By the end of the fourth week, the trainee should know at least 50% of the commonplace names.</i>

Methods of Instruction

Guidance

Select training methods. There are various ways to deliver training in an ECC. Each has advantages and disadvantages. In some cases, ECCs do not have access or the resources to conduct classroom training.

Tips and Advice

There are many ways to deliver training. A variety of training methods is a good approach.

Sample Language

- Classroom*
- Lecture*
- Group Discussion*
- Practical Exercises*
- Self-paced/Self-study*
- Virtual*
- Mentoring*

Classroom Management

Guidance

Effective classroom management is essential for creating an environment that is most conducive to learning. Even if you are not in a traditional classroom, setting boundaries, creating a positive environment, and accepting everyone's differences are key to developing positive relationships between the instructor and pupils.

Tips and Advice

Easy access to training is an important feature for employees.

Sample Language

Instructors should focus on keeping the training environment positive and use techniques to engage the learner.

Minimum Hourly Requirement

Guidance

ECCs should include the minimum hourly requirement for each block of instruction. This will allow the PST and the instructor to understand the necessary hours to successfully complete training.

Tips and Advice

Many industry best practices and standards do not include an hourly requirement as it varies from agency to agency and is dependent on their needs.

Sample Language

Unit Overview			
Lesson Plan Title	(Title)	Approximate Time Needed	(Number of hours)

Trainers

Guidance

Select trainers who will conduct the training based on the type of training and who will be receiving it.

Tips and Advice

A trainer could be another PST, communications training officer (CTO), supervisor, training coordinator, director/manager, or another stakeholder.

Sample Language

Trainers should undergo training in adult learning principles to learn how to teach the adult learner and keep them engaged in the training process.

If the topic is on orientation, perhaps a human resource (HR) professional could conduct part of the training.



Assessment and Evaluation

Guidance

Assessment and evaluation of learning typically occur when an instructor evaluates the PST to a set of goals and standards. There are various methods of assessing a PST's knowledge and skills—typically either trying to measure the knowledge acquisitions or the demonstration of skills.

Tips and Advice

When developing evaluation questions, questions must be reliable, relevant, and valid.

Sample Language

Knowledge Acquisition

1. *Describe the repetitive process technique?*

Skill Acquisition

1. *Enter the following CAD alerts into the map.*

Lessons Plans

Guidance

Use a lesson plan template to document the course topic, the delivery method, the number of hours, the learning objectives and information to be taught, as well as how the PST will be evaluated.

Tips and Advice

Having lesson plan templates ensures that different trainers use the same information to teach trainees and are not relying on memory to pass along important messages.

(Appendix E, Model Lesson Plan, contains a lesson plan template.)

Sample Language

[Refer to Appendix E, Model Lesson Plan.]

Daily Observation Reports (DORs)

Guidance

The purpose of a DOR is to provide timely feedback. A DOR serves to document the tasks that a PST has been taught and observed each day. A DOR should provide both corrective actions, as well reinforcement of positive behaviors.

Tips and Advice

DORs should be objective, in that they should only state the facts and not be subjective (opinions) in nature.

Sample Language

Today, Joe correctly entered all addresses into the CAD system.

Joe needed prompting to ensure he got the caller's name. Once this was discussed, Joe improved and did not forget to ask the caller's name.

On-the-job Training (OJT)

Guidance

A large part of learning in the ECC is conducted by hands-on practical demonstrations of skills. OJT is a multi-step process.

1. Introduction – The trainee should be introduced to the expectations and objectives of each task.
2. Demonstration – The instructor should first demonstrate how to perform the skill.
3. Coaching – The trainee tries the skill, receiving feedback from the instructor.
4. Observation – The trainee performs the task with no feedback, demonstrating they have acquired the necessary skill.
5. Assessment – The trainee can both verbally and practically prove they have mastered the skill.

Tips and Advice

Using a training environment is a great place to introduce skills and allows a trainee to become comfortable with the skill(s) before introducing them to a live 911 environment.

Sample Language

The trainee shall demonstrate the ability to enter a call for service into CAD that includes:

- *Location of the incident*
- *Callback phone number*
- *Type of incident*
- *Caller's name*
- *All pertinent call information*

Feedback on the Training Program

Guidance

Since the training document is living and breathing, you should seek feedback on the training program. This can be done as classes are taught, or a yearly review. The results of the feedback can provide insight as to what is effective or ineffective. You should use these results to update training as needed.

Tips and Advice

Surveys are a reliable and effective means of capturing reactions.

Sample Language

1. *Do you think the training program adequately prepared you for this position?*
2. *Did training content meet your expectations?*
3. *How would you rate the quality of the training (1 to 5 ranking system)?*
4. *How would you rate the quality of the instructor (1 to 5 ranking system)?*
5. *How was the instructor/trainer's enthusiasm?*

Recordkeeping

Guidance

Each ECC should document and maintain all training and certification records per records retention policies. Many states and federal agencies have records retention policies that require ECCs to keep employee training records for a set period. Or that an ECC adopts a retention schedule.

Tips and Advice

You should become familiar with the type of records to be maintained and for how long. Or adopt a retention schedule.

Sample Language

All training records shall be kept for a minimum of three years after an employee has left the ECC.

Appendix E – Model Lesson Plan

Author			
Name	{First name} {Last name}	Date	mm/dd/yyyy
Lesson Plan Approval	{First name} {Last name}	Date	mm/dd/yyyy
Review/Revision history	{mm/dd/yyyy},{mm/dd/yyyy},{mm/dd/yyyy},		
Unit Overview			
Lesson Plan Title	{Title}	Approximate time needed	{# of hours}
Key Lesson Points/Objectives		Lesson Description	
Resources Needed		Source of Information	
Evaluation Methods			
Conducting the Activity			